

HISTORY OF THE ABIPONES.

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tested the hard-heartedness of the old women in thus torturing the girls, yet the skill they display in the operation always excited my wonder. For on both cheeks they form all sorts of figures with wondrous proportion, variety, and equality of the lines, with the aid of no other instrument than thorns of various sizes. Every Abiponian woman you see has a different pattern on her face. Those that are most painted and pricked you may know to be of high rank and noble birth, and if you meet a woman with but three or four black lines on her face, you may be quite certain she is either a captive, or of low birth. When Christian discipline was firmly established in the Abiponian colonies, this vile custom was by our efforts abolished, and the women now retain their natural appearance.

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847 of the infanticide mothers. We, who have grown old amongst the Abipones, should pronounce her a singularly good woman who brings up two or three sons. But the whole Abiponian nation contains so few such mothers, that their names might all be inscribed on a ring. I have known some who killed all the children they bore, no one either preventing or avenging these murders. Such is the impunity with which crimes are committed when they become common, as if custom could excuse their impiety. The mothers bewail their children, who die of a disease, with sincere tears; yet they dash their new-born babes against the ground, or destroy them in some other way, with calm countenances. Europeans will scarce believe that such affection for their dead children can co-exist with such cruelty towards them while they are alive, but to us it is certain and indubitable. After our instructions, however, had engrafted a reverence for the divine law in the minds of the Abipones, the barbarity of the mothers gradually disappeared, and husbands, with joyful eyes, beheld their hands no longer stained with the blood of their offspring, but their arms laden with those dear pledges. These are the fruits and the triumphs of religion, which fills not only Heaven but earth with inhabitants. When polygamy and di-

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vorce, the iniquitous murdering of infants, and
the liberty of spontaneous abortion were at
length, by means of Christian discipline, abo-
lished, the nation of the Abipones, within a
few years, rejoiced to see itself enriched with
incredible accessions of both sexes.

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and travel about continually. Neither rugged roads, nor distances of places, prevent them from a journey; for both men and women travel on horses which are swift and numerous there, and if they are in haste, traverse vast tracts of land every day. I shall now describe the equipment of the horse, and the method of riding. The bit which they use is composed of a cow's horn fastened on each side to four little pieces of wood placed transversely, and to a double thong which supplies the place of a bridle. Some use iron bits, of which they are very proud. The major part have saddles like English ones, of a raw bull's hide stuffed with reeds. Stirrups are not in general use. The men leap on to their horse on the right side. With the right hand they grasp the bridle, with the left a very long spear, leaning upon which they jump up with the impulse of both feet, and then fall right upon the horse's back. The same expedition in dismounting, which would excite the admiration of a European, is very useful to them in skirmishes. They use no spurs even at this day. For a whip, they make use of four strips of a bull's hide twisted together, with which they stimulate new or refractory horses to the course, not by the sense of pain, but by the fear excited by the cracking of the whip. The

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291 respectable appearance. When they are hew-
 [313] ing down a tree, and are afraid of being fatigued,
 they will sometimes throw off their clothes, if
 they be out of sight. Some strip themselves
 [726] quite naked when they are going to join battle
 [703] with the savages, partly that, being lighter, they
 may be so much the more expeditious in avoid-
 ing their adversaries' weapons, partly, that they
 may appear to despise wounds. In long jour-
 [424] nies, they generally go bareheaded amidst rain,
 heat, and wind. Some, however, tie a piece of
 red woollen cloth round their forehead, which
 is a great defence against the heat of the sun
 [177] and pains in the head. They greatly prize a
 European hat, especially the young men, who
 likewise are much delighted with Spanish
 saddles, with spurs, and iron bridles. The wo-
 men wear the same dress as the men, adjusted
 in rather a different manner.

462 The clothing of the Abipones is the chief em-
 286 ployment of the women, who are commendable
 for their assiduity, and almost avidity in labour:
 for not to mention the daily business of the
 [386] house, they shear sheep, spin the wool very
 neatly, dye it beautifully, by the aid of alum,
 with any colours they may have at hand, and
 afterwards weave it into cloth, adorned with a
 great number of lines and figures, and with a
 variety of colours. You would take it for a

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when the Abipones are bathed in sweat, the otters' skins, from not being dressed, exhale, I confess, a by no means balsamic odour. On coldish nights they are used for counterpanes. These skins and cloaks, when worn by use, generally serve to wrap and cover infants, and, when they have no linen in the house, to bind up wounds.

In former ages the Americans preferred nakedness to clothing so greatly, that they refused or threw away the garments offered them by the Europeans. Now, however, the ardour with which the Paraguayan Indians seek fine dresses exceeds belief. Give them a handsome hat, some pieces of red linen or cloth, or a string of glass-beads, and they will pay you the profoundest homage and obedience. Day and night did the Abipones pester us with the following petition: Give me a dress, father! *Pay! Tuchcaut hihilalk, or aaparaik.* There is no surer method of gaining the hearts of the Indians than giving them clothes. No American colony will abound in Christian inhabitants, unless it also abound in sheep and oxen; the wool of the former being necessary to clothe, and the flesh of the latter to feed the bodies of the Indians. If both or either of these articles be wanting, they will return to their

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a husband; which of these is meant, must be gathered from the tenor of the conversation. / Perhaps there are nowhere more virgins than in the country of the Abipones, yet they cannot express a virgin except by a paraphrase, as *haayè* simply means a young girl. For never, they say *chik* or *chit*, thus, I shall never go hence: *Chik rihukàm*. They more frequently say, *Chitlgihe rihukàm*. *Chitlgihe* means, there appears no time in which I shall go hence. They express *eternal* by interminable, thus: Life eternal, *Eleyra chit kataikañi*, the life which is not finished. We used the Spanish word for God, whose name they are ignorant of: *Dios*, *eknam Kaógarik*, or *Naenatranak hipigem, kachka aald*. God, who is the maker of all things, or the creator of heaven and earth. *Kand* signifies to make; *Kaógarik*, a maker. They call eggs *Tetarik l'kauetè*, the hen's work.

They cannot express *everywhere* in one word, but explain it in this way: God is in heaven, in earth, and there is not a place in which he is not; *Menetahegem quem hipigém, menetañi quen aalod, ka chigekòr amè, chig enaè*. I omit innumerable other words which they want, but which they make up for in various ways. Many things which we always express with one and the same word, they distinguish with various names, or entirely transform, by clothing the original word

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faces by this name as if they were a terror to the eyes.

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Latè, indicates the place of action, thus: *Nahandt̃ralatè*, the place of the fight. *Kiñc̃ralatè*, the place where one eats, that is, the table.

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They ingeniously invented names borrowed from their native tongue, for things introduced from Europe, or made by Europeans. They did not like either to appear poor in words, or to contaminate their language by adopting foreign ones, like the other Americans who borrow words from the Spaniards. Horses, which the Spaniards call *cavallos*, the Guaranies call *cavayà*, and oxen, which the Spaniards call *novillos*, they call *nobl*. The Abipones, on the contrary, call a horse *ahēpegak*, an ox, *yūihāk*, and a bull, *yūihāk lepà*, an uncastrated ox, a name derived from their own language, though, before the coming of the Spaniards, they were unacquainted with these animals. They call a church *lokal* (*čērīki*, the house of images, or *natamenrēki*, where thanks are given to God. A gun is expressed by *netelrānre*, which means a bow from which arrows are cast. Perhaps it is derived from the word *netè*, a storm, because a gun resembles the thundering of a storm. Gunpowder is called *netelrānre leenrū*, the flour of the gun; a book, *lakatka*, which means a word, tongue, speech. They call a letter, or any

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- 177 sheet with letters written or printed on it, *192 *elorka*, by which name they also designate the otters' skins painted by women with red lines of various forms, of which cloaks are made to keep out the cold. They call water-melons, *Káma lakà*, the food of the Spaniards. They express a soul, a shadow, echo, and an image, all by the same word, *lókakà*, or *lkihà*. The Latins also used the word *imago*, for an echo. Valerius Flaccus, in the third book of the Argonautics, says :

*Rursus Hylam, et rursus Hylam per longa reclamationis
Aria, resonant sylva, et vaga certat imago.*

Echo is a representation of voice, as an image is that of the figure. Cotton, the material of which cloth is made, they call *aupañik*, cloth; wheat, *ctantà lpetà*, the grain of bread; and bullets, *netelñanñe lpetà*, the grain of the gun, or *Káamà lmañha*, the arrows of the Spaniards. A lute or harp is called *lithigi*, which means the loins of an animal; all metals, *lekàt*, and silver money, *lekacháole*, little metals; hell, *aalà labachiñi*, the centre of the earth, or *Keevét lëeriki*, the devil's house; a shirt, *yelamñkie*; stockings or boots, *lichil lelamñkiè*; breeches, *ykiemañha*; shoes, *yachrháñlatè*; a hat, *ñoarà*; a fillet, mitre, or any covering of the head, *yetapehè*; glass-beads, *ekelñaye*. I omit the rest.

*192 Metaphors are familiar to these savages.

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622 being herself thrown, affords an amusing spectacle to the assembled people. During the remaining days, (for those games last eight days,) either the former sports are renewed, or the men joyfully indulge in public drinking-parties, wherein songs are alternately sung to the sound of drum. Of the other games,

[527] on the occasion of some person's being admitted to the rank of captain, of the celebration of any signal victory, of the death of a noble, the removal of the bones of the dead, the shaving of a widow's hair, &c. we shall discourse elsewhere. Of this I am quite certain, that

[184] the Abipones Nakaiketergehes, or wood-Abipones, are much more observant of national rites and ceremonies than the rest. It is incredible what time and labour it cost us to abolish the national rites of this ferocious nation, which the example of their ancestors had hallowed in their eyes. An oak a hundred years old, which has stuck its roots deep into the ground, is not felled at a blow. But now, from nuptial and natal games, let us proceed to things of a more gloomy character, to diseases, physicians, and medicines.

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for at first, whenever they fell sick, the dread of ¹²³
baptism induced them to fly to the lurking- ⁷⁴⁷
holes of the woods, or cause others to carry
them there. During the latter years, almost
all of them reposed the greatest confidence in
us, and entertained the utmost good-will to-
wards us, and if they remembered our having
ever cured them with any medicine; desired to
have it given to their hordesmen when they fell
ill. From one instance you may judge of ^[136]
others. In the northern parts of Paraguay there
grows a nut, called *Piñon del Paraguay* by the
Spaniards, and by physicians *nux cathartica*, be-
cause it causes both vomiting and purging. It
ridiculously deceived the first Spaniards who
visited Paraguay. Delighted with its sweet-
ness they eagerly ate this fruit, and to the
great amusement of all, found what they had
taken for food to be a medicine, which attacks
the human body with double arms, and expels
noxious or superfluous humours by two ways.
We gave three or four of these nuts to the Abi-
pones, for whom we thought purging necessary,
and they all received great benefit from the use ¹²³
of them. Hence, whenever they felt any ¹⁷⁷
weight on their stomachs, they asked us for ⁷⁴⁷
this medicine of their own accord. The same
was the case with regard to other remedies.
The old women, who obstinately adhered to

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123 former customs, raved when they found their
797 medicines laughed at, and the fountain of their
177 gains dried up. The jugglers, who had sucked
the bodies, and drained the property of the
sick, were despised by their countrymen as a
set of worthless drones.

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756 The Patagonians, and other southern savages,
think the body of a sick person to be possessed
of an evil demon. Their physicians carry about
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[534] drums, with horrible forms depicted on them,
which they strike by the sick man's bed, either
to consult the demon concerning the nature of
the disease, or to drive it from the body of their
patient. If any one dies of a disease, the rela-
tions persecute the physician most terribly, as
the author of his death. If a Cacique dies, they

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[766] put all the physicians to death, that they may
not fly elsewhere. Actuated by an irrational
kind of pity, they bury the dying before they
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[763] expire. Father Strobl pulled one man alive
from the grave. The Guaycurus call their phy-
sicians Nigienigis. A gourd filled with hard
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756 seeds, and a fan of dusky emu feathers are their
chief insignia, and medical instruments, which
they always carry in their hands that they may

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756 be known. I must not omit to speak of the phy-
sicians of the Chiquitos. A juggler physician,
when he goes to visit the sick, fills his belly
with the most exquisite dainties, chickens, hens,

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the day. That the lamentations might be carried on without intermission, the jugglers, carrying a spear with a bell at the end of it, visited all the houses to admonish the women at what hours to mourn. The funeral computation, meantime, and the conducting of it as magnificently as was due to the memory of so great a leader, was the sole care of the men—a care admirably calculated to abate the poignancy of their grief; and indeed it would be difficult to decide whether the men drank, or the women mourned most pertinaciously. Whilst this was going on at home, persons of both sexes were chosen to accompany the bones of Ychamenrainkin to his family burying-place, and there inter them agreeably to the rites of their country. These ceremonies were observed by the savages before they were instructed in the Christian religion only. Other removals of bones were conducted in exactly the same manner, with the exception of the canopy, which was reserved exclusively for their leaders. The bones of seven Abipones, who had been slain by the Spaniards, were brought home on one day, and skilfully constructed into as many images; hats being placed on their skulls, and clothes on their bodies. These seven skeletons were placed in a savage hut, honoured for nine suc-

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FORMERLY WHEN THEY WERE
 unacquainted with the very name of iron, they⁴¹¹
 fought with wooden spears, fixing a cow's or^[237]
 stag's horn to the end of them by way of a
 point. But when the Abipones obtained iron^[177]
 points from the Spaniards, they dexterously
 inserted them into their spears, and used them
 to slaughter those from whom they had re-
 ceived them. When going to fight they grease
 the point of the spear with tallow, that it may
 enter more readily and deeper into the flesh.
 We have sometimes seen spears four palms
 deep in hostile blood, with such force had the
 Abipones driven them into the sides of the sa-
 vages who attacked our colony. As their tents^[342]
 and huts are in general rather low, they fix their
 spears at the threshold of the door to have
 them always in readiness. By the number of
 spears you may know the number of warriors
 which the horde contains. As European geno-^[723]
 rals, to conceal the scanty number of their
 forces, and to supply the want of warlike in-
 struments, have sometimes placed machines of
 painted wood, on mounds, to frighten their
 more numerous adversary; we, in like manner,
 availing ourselves of the same species of cun-
 ning, fixed spears hastily made of reeds or
 wood, in the houses of the absent Abipones;
 deluded by which the enemies' scouts reported
 to their countrymen that the town was full of
 DEFENDERS.

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[713] breastplates, which would be of little service
[726] against leaden bullets. In a strong appear, a
swift horse, and a crafty ambuscade, they then
place all their hopes of victory, and seldom
engage on foot, unless absolutely obliged.
They had rather combat the enemy from a dis-
tance, than close at hand, when they fear for
their lives. They oftener kill piecemeal than
[772] with downright blows. Though the major part
[439] have either purchased swords from the Spa-
niards, or taken them in war, they seldom make
use of them in skirmishing.

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these drinking-parties, as well as the married men.

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You will sooner eradicate from the minds of the Americans any vice belonging to them, than this wicked and pernicious intemperance in drinking. You will sooner persuade them to live content with one wife, to abstain from slaughter and rapine, to scorn their ancient superstitions, or to employ themselves in agriculture and building houses, notwithstanding their aversion to labour. To abolish the custom of drinking-parties is indeed a most arduous work, a labour of many years, and a business to perfect which no eloquence or industry of those whose care and wish it was to convert the savage nations to Christianity, and conform them to the divine laws, was ever equal. At length, however, we have had the satisfaction of beholding this wicked custom of drinking yield to our unwearied toils, and almost all the savages submit to the law of God.

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